

every feature of the claims as required by 35 U.S.C. 102.

Regarding claim 1, Okumura fails to teach a trench-gate semiconductor-body having active cell areas and inactive cell areas, wherein linking cells are provided “across the inactive and active areas, **wherein each linking cell has a first region contacted by the gate electrode and a source region contacted by the source electrode.**”

As shown in FIGS. 7A of Okumura, the gate electrode 43 contacts the surface of a n-type source region 25 formed in a portion of the base region 23 (i.e., the portion of the base region 23 located between the third and fourth trenches 29 from the right side of FIG. 7A). The source electrode 41, however, does not contact any portion of the surface of that portion of the base region 23, and does not contact any of the n-type source regions 25 formed in that portion of the base region 23. On the contrary, as is clearly illustrated in FIG. 7A of Okumura, the source electrode 41 is **insulated** from that portion of the base region 23 by a section of the interlayer insulation film 35. Thus, the Examiner’s statement in the Response to Arguments section of the above-referenced Final Office Action, that the “Okumura reference does disclose ... linking cells that are contacted by the gate electrode (33) and the source region contacted by the source electrode (43) (Refer to Fig. 7A)” is incorrect.

Accordingly, because Okumura fails to teach each and every feature of the claims, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants’ undersigned

attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ronald A. D'Alessandro', written over a horizontal line.

Ronald A. D'Alessandro
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